A Relation of the Effect of a Thunder Clap on the Compaſs of a Ship on the Coaſt of New England.

ON July 24th. Anno 1681. The Ship called the *Albemarle*, whereof Mr. *Edward Lad* was then Maſter, being a hundred Leagues from *Cape-Cod*, in Latitude 48d. about 3h. p. m. met with a Thunder Storm; the lightning burnt the Main-top-Sail, ſplit the Main Cap in pieces, rent the maſt all along; There was in Special one dreadful clap of Thunder, in report bigger then of a Great Gun, at which all the Ships company were amazed; then did there fall ſomething from the Clouds, upon the Stern of the Boat, which broak into many ſmall parts, ſplit one of the Pumps: the other Pump much hurt alſo; It was a Bituminous matter, ſmelling much like fired Gun-powder: It continued burning in the Stern of the Boat; they did with ſticks diſſipate it, and powred much water on it, and yet they were not able by all that they could doe, to extinguiſh it, until ſuch time as all the matter was conſum'd. But the ſtrangeſt thing of all is yet to be mentioned.

When night came obſerving the Stars, they perceived that their compaſſes were changed; as for the Compaſſes in the Bittakle, the North Point was turn'd clear South. There were two other Compaſſes unhung in the Locker in the Cabin, in one of which the North Point ſtood South, like that in the Bittakle, as for the other, the North Point ſtood Weſt; So that they ſailed by a needle whoſe Polarity was quite changed: The Seamen were at firſt puzzled to work their Veſſel Right, conſidering that the South Point of their Compaſs was now become North

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North; but after a little uſe, it was eaſie to them: thus did they Sail a thouſand Leagues. As for the Compaſs wherein the lightning had made the needle to point Weſtward, ſince it was brought to New England, the Glaſs being broken, it has by means of the Airs comming to it, wholly loſt its virtue. One of thoſe Compaſſes which had quite changed the Polarity from North to South, is ſtill extant in the Country, in the hands of Mr. Increaſe Mather.

The North Point of the Needle doth remain fixed to this day, as it did imediatly after the lightning cauſed an Alteration.

A Letter of Sir R. S. *concerning the former Relation. Lond. March 8th.* 168..

HAving already given you the Narrative of the Thunder Storm, I add to it this further account, that Mr. Edward Randolph (who has been four times imployed to New England in his Majeſties Service; and coming from thence in May laſt 1683) told Mr. Flamſtead in Auguſt how much that accident was there diſcourſed of. And being by him enjoyned to make further enquiry into the matter at his return to Boſton, he did in December at his Arrival there, ſpeak with Mr. Lad himſelf, who was in the Storm, and affirmed the ſame thing, and dictated to him an account ſuitable to what you have. But that which you have was in the hands of Mr. Mather a Miniſter, to whom Mr. Lad had